

an angle-adjustment sleeve surrounding a portion of said needle wherein said portion is intermediate said distal end and said one end; and wherein said angle-adjustment sleeve is movable concurrently with said needle from a first position to a predetermined second position to adjust the angle at which the needle extends;

the distal end of said needle including an arcuate longitudinal skived portion having an arcuate height of a predetermined proportional ratio relative to the diameter of said bore.

Claims 19 - 21 remain as originally presented.

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Claim 22 remains as once amended.

Claim 23 remains as originally presented.

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for her courtesy in extending Applicant's attorney a telephone interview on 23 September 2002. During that interview, the teachings of the prior art of record and proposed claim subject matter were discussed. The Examiner's helpful suggestions are greatly appreciated.

1. Claims 18 - 23, inclusive have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stropko (5,378,149) in view of Riitano (6,069,979). Claim 18 has been amended to more definitively locate the angle-adjustment sleeve intermediate the distal end and the encapsulated end of the needle and wherein the angle-adjustment sleeve is movable concurrently with the needle. This arrangement is entirely unlike the references in which the angle adjustment is accomplished by way of a movable neck into which a needle is inserted. The movable element of the Riitano reference is the neck 160 of irrigator tip 150. As seen in Figure 3, this movable element is not located around the needle

intermediate its distal and proximal ends, as in the present invention, but is located between the syringe 90 and the needle 60. Additionally, the Riitano reference specifically teaches away from the present arrangement in presenting an arrangement in which bending of the needle itself is not necessary. Accordingly, it is respectfully asserted that claim 18 as amended, is in condition for allowance and avoids the cited references. The remaining claims, namely claims 19 - 23, inclusive depend from amended claim 18, believed to be in condition for allowance, and as such are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

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2. Claims 16 and 17 are indicated to be allowed.

Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be removed, that amended claim 18 and claims 19- 23, inclusive, be passed to allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,

By



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Enclosures: Clean Version of Claims
Amendment Transmittal Letter